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14
THE SIGN GIVEN TO AHAZ.

A
DISCOURSE

ON ISAIAH VII. 14, 15, 16.

DELIVERED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST. JOHN DEVIZES,
AT THE TRIENNIAL VISITATION OF
SHUTE LORD BISHOP OF SARUM,

ON WEDNESDAY JULY 26. 1786.

AND PUBLISHED BY HIS LORDSHIP'S COMMAND,

BY BENJAMIN BLAYNEY, B. D. K

RECTOR OF POULSHOT, WILTS.

To which is subjoined,

A proposed EMENDATION of a Passage in a DISSERTATION
formerly published by the same AUTHOR, on DAN. ix. ver. 20,
to the end.

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Imprimatur,

JOSEPH CHAPMAN,

VICE-CHAN. OXON.

TO THE HONOURABLE
AND RIGHT REVEREND
SHUTE LORD BISHOP OF SARUM
THIS DISCOURSE
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY HIS LORDSHIP'S
MOST DUTIFUL
AND DEVOTED SERVANT

BENJAMIN BLAYNEY.

POULSHOT,
Oct. 18. 1786.

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MOST DUTIFUL

AND DEVOTED SERVANT

BENJAMIN BLAYNEY

Printed
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J. B. B. B.

ISAIAH VII. 14, 15, 16.

THEREFORE THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL GIVE YOU A SIGN; BEHOLD, A VIRGIN SHALL CONCEIVE, AND BEAR A SON, AND SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL.

BUTTER AND HONEY SHALL HE EAT, THAT HE MAY KNOW TO REFUSE THE EVIL, AND CHOOSE THE GOOD. FOR BEFORE THE CHILD SHALL KNOW TO REFUSE THE EVIL, AND CHOOSE THE GOOD, THE LAND, THAT THOU ABHORREST, SHALL BE FORSAKEN OF BOTH HER KINGS.

“THE testimony of Jesus,” says the Angel in the Revelations^a, “is the spirit of prophecy.” And of course the more clearly a prophecy is understood, the evidence resulting from it must appear proportionably more full and convincing. The words of the Text contain a prophecy relating immediately to the person of Christ, and his

^a Rev. xix. 10.

residence among men. They are cited as such by St. Matthew in the beginning of his gospel^b. And though attempts have been made to dispossess us of their authority, by representing them as originally otherwise intended, and applicable only by way of accommodation, the blaze of truth has shone superior to any such fallacious misrepresentations. But though the general scope of the prophecy be plain and undeniable, the particular parts of it, it must be confessed, are less perfectly understood, than might have been expected, considering the length of time that has passed since its accomplishment. That difficulties still remain, is evident from the numerous and differing attempts, that have been made by men of eminence in learning to remove them. Nor does it seem to me, that any solution has hitherto been proposed, sufficient to satisfy and convince the judgment. It must naturally be the wish of every friend to Christianity to have this argument in its favour set forth in its true and proper light. I conclude therefore that a critical discussion of it will not be deemed unseasonable, nor unworthy the attention of this venerable assembly. On your candour I shall rely for a favourable construction of my endeavours, even though they should fail of producing in your minds that clear conviction, which I seem to feel in my own.

The present obscurity of the prophecy seems to arise in the main from two grand misconceptions concerning the

^b Matt. i. 22, 23.

matter of it. The one is, that a prophetic sign is therein exhibited, the completion of which was to be posterior by many centuries to an event, of which it was meant to convey a fuller assurance. The second relates to the interpretation annexed to the words, "Butter and honey shall he eat," ver. 15. which, I apprehend, have a meaning totally different from that which is generally understood. When these two mistakes are rectified, it will not, I trust, be a difficult matter to arrive at a clear and consistent explication of the whole passage.

With respect to the first point, I have been in some measure forestalled in my observations by a late ingenious publication^c, in which it is unanswerably shewn, that the miraculous birth of the Messiah, future and remote as it was, could not have been a sign or assurance to Ahaz, or the house of David, that God would speedily deliver them from their present enemies^d. The Author, after having sufficiently invalidated this prevailing opinion, proceeds to his own proper explication of the passage; in which he states, that instead of the birth of the Messiah being given to Ahaz for a sign of his approaching deliverance, that deliverance itself was

^c The publication alluded to is, "A Discourse in two parts, upon the same text, preached before the University of Cambridge, by T. Postlethwaite, B. D. and printed at Cambridge, 1781." This Discourse was composed soon after; how it came to be so long suppressed, is a question not at all interesting to the public.

^d Postlethwaite's Discourse, Part. I.

the sign held forth to confirm the certainty of the future extraordinary birth^e. This, no doubt, is more in the natural order of things; and, I am persuaded, is in part at least the truth^d; for it is my design to shew in the sequel of this Discourse, that the deliverance of Ahaz from the dangers he was threatened with, was a part, though but a part only, of what was intended for a sign of the accomplishment of the prediction concerning Christ. In other conjectures I think him less happy. For he holds nearly in common with the generality of expositors, that by the words, "Butter and honey shall he eat," and what follows besides ver. 15. is meant, that the infancy of Christ should not be exempt from "the common infirmities of childhood," but should require the "same tender care in nursing, the same sort of mild and delicate food," as is necessary to bring other infants to their full "growth both in stature and wisdom^f." This will be controverted, when I come to treat of the second general source of obscurity. Besides this, he maintains, that THE CHILD spoken of ver. 16. before whose coming to the knowledge of good and evil the enemies of Judah were to be cut off, is not the same with that child, whose miraculous birth was before predicted, but another, whose birth was immediately at hand^g. In this opinion also he is not fin-

^e Pofflethwaite's Discourse, Part II.

^d Pofflethwaite's Discourse, p. 18. See also Archbishop Usher's opinion cited by Mr. Lowth in his Note upon v. 15.

^g Pofflethwaite's Discourse, p. 15-19.

gular^h, though contradictory to the established usage of language, and the ordinary form of construction. For the use of language requires, that the Hebrew particle ה should be considered as having the same force as the definite article THE in English, and should be so translated. THE CHILD must consequently denote that which was before spoken of, and whose discernment of good and evil had been already noticed. Our Author indeed urgesⁱ, that the same particle had been before translated by the indefinite article A in the instance of, A VIRGIN SHALL CONCEIVE ; but even there THE VIRGIN would have been much properer by way of eminence, and to denote the singularity of the case. And the commission of a mistake in one instance can be no justification of it in another, although the former may have been overlooked as of no material consequence, whilst to allow of the latter would lead to a total perversion of the sense. .

Having been led to say thus much of this Author's hypothesis, out of regard to the force of his reasonings against making the remoter event a sign that portended the nearer ;

^h The late learned Dr. Kennicott was of opinion, that the Child spoken of v. 16. was not the Messiah, whose birth was predicted in the preceding verses, but Shear-jashub, Isaiah's son, spoken of ver. 3. to whom he supposes the Prophet might point with his hand, and that הַנֶּעֱר should be rendered *this Child*. But notwithstanding his authorities to justify such a translation, it seems abundantly more natural to understand the same Child that was before introduced to notice. See Dr. Kennicott's Sermon on Isai. vii. 13, 14, 15, 16. published in 1765.

ⁱ P. 15, 16.

reasonings,

reasonings, which I so far approve, as to beg leave to refer to them for the sake of brevity ; I shall now go on to subjoin my own opinion concerning the whole of that sign, which I conceive to have been really and actually given. It can hardly be supposed, that GOD, who was justly offended at the impious distrust of Ahaz, would make any fresh effort to conquer his fears, or sooth him with further hopes of deliverance. The reproof that followed upon his refusal of the sign offered him, instead of comfort, breathes only a design to punish. “ Hear ye now, O house of David ; Is it a small “ thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my GOD “ also ? Therefore JEHOVAH himself shall give you a sign^k.” The words that come next indeed foretel an event of the most gracious and beneficial import to mankind in general, which it pleased GOD to make use of the present occasion to communicate, and to leave impressed with the strongest proofs of authentication. But Ahaz was likely to derive little satisfaction from the prospect of such an event, that was to take place in ages to come, even if he had understood it, or been disposed to credit the prediction. But in the sign he was more immediately interested ; for he was soon, himself, his family, and his subjects, to have bitter experience of its verification. At the beginning it seemed to sound favourably ; for GOD would not retract the promise he had given, nor falsify his word, in not bringing to pass the deliverance he

^k Isai. vii. 13, 14.

had before announced. "Surely¹ before the Child, of whose
 "extraordinary birth thou hast heard, can be qualified to
 "fulfil the purposes of his mission, the land of thine ene-
 "mies," says the divine oracle, the land of Syria and Israel,
 "shall indeed be left desolate." But little would this tem-
 porary sunshine of prosperity avail, in prospect of that black
 cloud of horror, which threatened to burst in vengeance over
 his devoted head. In our Version indeed, which is made
 from the present Hebrew text, we see not the connexion so
 strongly marked, as it is in that of THE SEVENTY, which
 was made in all probability after a more perfect original.
 There we find the adversative particle BUT prefixed to the
 17th verse; "BUT JEHOVAH shall bring upon thee^m, and
 "upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days such
 "as have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from
 "Judah." From hence to the end of the chapter follows a
 very particular enumeration of all those calamities, which
 began to fall upon Judah soon after the destruction of the
 two hostile kingdoms beforementioned, and were continued
 on with very little interruption, till the desolation was ren-
 dered as complete, as the terms of the prophecy import, by
 the Babylonish captivity. From a combination of all these

¹ כִּי is thus rendered, Gen. xxix. 32. Exod. iv. 25. Num. xxii. 33. xxiii. 23.
 Judg. vi. 16. Isai. lx. 9. Jer. xxii. 22, and in many other places.

^m ΑΛΛΑ ΕΠΕΛΕΙ Ο ΘΕΟΣ ΕΠΙ ΟΙΣ—LXX.

events together results the sign intended, a tremendous sign indeed to those who were destined for the immediate subject of it ; but calculated to produce the most ample and consolatory assurance of the future promised blessing in the minds of all, who saw the several parts of it within a few years fulfilled to a tittle, one after another, in the most orderly successionⁿ. Just such a one did our Saviour vouchsafe to exhibit to his disciples, when they asked him for a sign of his coming, and of the consummation of the age of the Mosaic dispensation. He first of all traces out to them what he emphatically calls “the beginning of sorrows;” and afterwards carries them on through a long train of the most sinister and illboding events, till the whole is terminated at last with this conclusive declaration, “So likewise ye, when “ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand^o.”

After having thus far considered the sign, and, I hope, cleared up the principal difficulties respecting it, it falls next within my purpose to examine what obscurity or misconcep-

ⁿ Hence it appears, that Dr. Kennicott had good ground for asserting, that a second Prophecy, distinct from the former, began at the 16th verse. Only he seems not to have noticed, that the second Prophecy was continued on to the end of the chapter, and was in its accomplishment the very sign intended to assure the latter still more important and more distant event. And this inattention probably was the cause of his error concerning the identity of the child. See the Sermon before mentioned, p. 28.

^o Matt. xxiv. 3—33. Luke xxi. 7—31.

tion may be found in those declarative words, with which the prophecy opens, and which contain the principal matter and ultimate object of it. In the first sentence the sense, I conceive, is as plain and as clearly to be understood as can be; BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL CONCEIVE, AND BEAR A SON, AND SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL. The article THE is emphatic; and THE VIRGIN being joined with the participles of the present tense (for such are all the verbs in the original) seems to distinguish this case from all others, and to import, that it was not A VIRGIN, who after having known man should conceive; but that she should still be THE VIRGIN at the time of her conception, delivery, and naming of her son. BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN CONCEIVETH, AND BEARETH A SON, AND CALLETH HIS NAME IMMANUEL. These circumstances mark out in so particular and eminent a manner the birth of the blessed Jesus, that it would require no small degree of artifice and perverseness to give them any other application. I shall therefore leave them as they stand, since from an attempt to explain further what is sufficiently clear already seldom any thing arises, but perplexity, darkness, and error.

But it has not been found so easy to ascertain the genuine meaning of the following sentence, BUTTER AND HONEY SHALL HE EAT, THAT HE MAY KNOW TO REFUSE THE EVIL, AND CHOOSE THE GOOD; the wrong interpretation of which words hath in my opinion conduced very much to

cast a veil of obscurity over the whole prophecy. The circumstance of "eating butter and honey" is by some understood to denote, that he should have occasion to be reared with the same sort of mild and delicate food, which was usually given to infants, to bring them forward to a maturity of stature and wisdom^p. But I do not find it any where intimated, in Scripture at least, that "butter and honey" was the appropriated food of children in their infancy, as "milk" is on many occasions said to be. Others represent "butter and honey" as the usual emblems of plenty, and as delicacies extremely agreeable to an eastern palate^q. All this may be very true; but what is to follow, when we come to apply these words, as applied they must be, to the person of Christ? Can it be imagined, that the living in the midst of plenty, or the gratification of the appetite with these, or with any other the choicest delicacies, contributes any thing to the improvement of a child's mental faculties? And yet something like this must enter into the notions of those who adopt the foregoing interpretation of the words, "Butter and honey shall he eat," and connect them with what follows, "that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good." The absurdity and inconsequence of this connexion has not escaped the notice of the last and best Commentator on Isaiah, who on the suggestion, as it seems, of a very learned Friend, has a little varied the translation, and instead of, THAT HE

^p Postlethwaite's Discourse, p. 11.

^q Bishop Lowth on Isaiah, Notes, p. 63. Harmer's Observations, Vol. I. p. 299.

MAY, renders, WHEN HE SHALL, KNOW TO REFUSE WHAT IS EVIL, AND CHOOSE WHAT IS GOOD'. But apply it once more to Christ, even after this emendation, (for to him this able Critic, though he admits the doctrine of double senses, allows it to refer in its strictest sense, and according to the principal intention of the prophetic spirit) and tell me, what there was to be found in our Lord's stile and manner of living, after he came to a distinguishing age, that deserved to be characterized by so particular a description. Neither in, nor after, his infancy, do we learn, that he was at all remarkable for either the abundance, or the delicacy of his fare.

Much rather do I think, that it was the humility and meanness of our Saviour's condition in life, that is here designed; an opinion, which suggested itself to me long before I knew that Vitringa had briefly cited it as that of an eminent German Divine'. On what reasons this learned foreigner grounded his opinion, we are not told'. But I am induced to rest mine on the following account of the matter. The land which God gave to the children of Israel is frequently celebrated as "a land that flowed with milk and "honey". The abundance of these articles rendered them

' Bishop Lowth on the place.

° Professor Alting.

* It is only said, that he inferred it from verse 22. of which hereafter. His opinion was, that the circumstance of "the Child's eating butter and honey" was intended to shew Ahaz the future decay of his house; which, though ever since David's time it had flourished in the greatest opulence and splendor, should hereafter be brought to such a state of indigence, that this descendant of the family should be obliged to live upon the meanest and most ordinary sort of food. See Vitringa upon the place.

" Exod. iii. 8. Num. xiii. 27, &c.

cheap ; and by their cheapness they were fitted to become the ordinary food of the meaner inhabitants. They were delicious, no doubt, and were for that reason commonly served up at the tables of the great, as cheese and fruits are with us, towards the close of the entertainment. And it ought to be remembered with thankfulness, as an instance of God's paternal care in providing for the comfortable subsistence of the whole human species, that there are scarcely any among them, who have not such things placed within their reach, as are not only good in themselves, but objects of desire even to those of the greatest affluence. The difference however between them is, that what the one like to regale upon now and then for an agreeable variety, the other are necessitated to take up with for their constant and almost only food. Which then of the two, do we imagine, would be characterized by it ; those to whom it was almost an essential, or those to whom it was merely an accidental appendage ? Had it been designed to mark out the condition of the rich and great by the consumption of their tables, instead of " butter and honey," the notice would more naturally have fallen upon their ample stores of corn and wine and oil, and the numerous animals that were fattened, and served up at their feasts. But with the humble poverty of the Saviour of mankind the plain and frugal diet of the poor more aptly corresponded.

But for a further proof of the justness of this explication, let us attend to the application of the same words, which again occur at the 22^d verse of the same chapter. AND IT

SHALL

SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT FOR THE ABUNDANCE OF MILK WHICH THEY SHALL GIVE HE SHALL EAT BUTTER ; FOR BUTTER AND HONEY SHALL EVERY ONE EAT THAT IS LEFT IN THE LAND. Here it is evident the food of grown up persons is intended, and not of infants. Nor were the times spoken of times of extraordinary peace and plenty ; unless you will call by the name of " peace " that dreadful silence and solitude to be found in a country, which has of late been laid waste, and afterwards abandoned, by a barbarous enemy. Such was the wretched situation of the land of Judah at the time alluded to by the prophet, when it was foretold, that of the few pillaged inhabitants that remained, those, whose whole stock consisted of only a cow and two sheep, should derive a subsistence sufficient for the purposes of life, though certainly not attended with much superfluity or elegance, from the spontaneous productions of nature ; the milk of their cattle, and the honey which was commonly to be met with in their woods, dropping wild from the trees ^w.

Let us pursue the track of discovery a step farther, and it will lead us to a view of the end and design, for which this wonderful Child was born, and lived in such a particular manner ; the defect of which in former interpretations

^w 1 Sam. xiv. 26.

seems a more material objection, than several which have been formally urged to discredit them. The design is contained in the following words, which may with almost equal propriety be translated either way, WHEN HE SHALL, or, THAT HE MAY, KNOW TO REFUSE THE EVIL, AND CHOOSE THE GOOD. When this great IMMANUEL was manifested and conversed among men, we find him wholly intent on erecting a spiritual kingdom, and exercising his faculty of discernment in choosing the good and virtuous for to be members of it, and rejecting such as were otherwise. Nor could there have been a properer criterion for making the distinction, than the mode of living which he adopted. The ambitious, the worldlyminded, the sensualist, were naturally disgusted with the meanness of his appearance. They saw nothing in him that could tempt them to lay a restraint upon their corrupt habits and inclinations; and they scorned to profess a faith in one, who was so far from having emoluments, such as they aspired after, to bestow, that he himself was destitute even of "a place where to lay his head." They therefore voluntarily declined having any part with him, and left it for those only to become the disciples of his pure and holy religion, whose hearts were of a frame and temper more congenial with it.

I am now come near to a conclusion of what I had to offer
on

on the subject of this important prophecy; which appears methinks with so much consistency, clearness, and unity, from the beginning throughout, that I flatter myself we cannot be far from seeing it in its true and proper light. I am not conscious of the least force put upon the natural construction or meaning of the words, which are taken just as they stand in the received text, with the addition only of a single particle from a version more ancient than the oldest of the Hebrew copies that are now extant. Unbelievers can now no longer deride us for admitting a fact for a sign, which, both on account of the time of its exhibition, and the very nature of it, could not possibly answer any such purpose. "For how," said they, not without some shew of reason, "could a person be persuaded of the certainty of a future event, which he was disposed to question, merely from being told at the same time, and upon the same authority only, that a second event, not less improbable than the first, should succeed it in after ages?" Or, setting aside the preposterous circumstance of time, "how could such a fact, as the birth of a child from a virgin, be itself of sufficient notoriety, to afford conviction to one, not absolutely credulous, of any matter whatsoever proposed to his belief?" To the first the answer has been already given, and the sign shewn to result from a chain of facts, impossible to be overlooked or mistaken; and not posterior to, but preceding, what was meant to be established by them. And as
to

to the delivery of the virgin, it was upon the credit of these facts having come to pass exactly according to prediction, that those who lived antecedently to it were called upon to expect that so it would be; as it is in consequence of the same, jointly with the miracles subsequently wrought, that we also are bound to believe, that the prophecy has in this instance been punctually fulfilled.

If any objection therefore still remains, it can be only, I think, to the novelty of the interpretation, which if such as we would have it thought, conducive to the confirmation and honour of our holy religion, how was it consistent with the wisdom and goodness of God's providence to let it lie so many ages dormant? To this, as it involves the case of all other attempts to illustrate the obscurity of Scripture prophecies, it may in general be replied; that it is not for us to fathom the depths of the divine counsels, nor to demand a reason, why God is pleased to grant more light at one time, or to one set of persons, than another. And with respect to this particular prophecy, will any one pretend to say, that enough of it was not before obvious and manifest, to bear testimony to the birth and incarnation of our blessed Saviour, the purpose for which it was cited by the Evangelist? Many probable reasons might be suggested to justify a further reserve. It might be the good pleasure of God to incite men to a diligent search into the holy Scriptures (an inquiry which can never be made by an honest heart without much
moral

moral as well as intellectual improvement) by holding forth as a reward the most pleasing of all rational delights, the discovery of truth, especially of important religious truth. Or, as the minds of men are apt to grow dead and insensible to what they have been long familiarized with, it may be a merciful condescension to human infirmity, to quicken the faith of Christians, from time to time, by new proofs continually growing up, and laying fresh claim to their attention. But whatever may be the motives of God's dealing in this manner, it is certainly our part, not to cavil at any new light afforded us, but most gladly and thankfully to embrace and improve it. And in proportion as the proofs of the truth and divinity of the gospel grow more strong and convincing, let us the more steadfastly adhere to it, and manifest our belief by a suitable conformity to all its holy laws.

T H E E N D

A proposed EMENDATION of a Passage in A DISSERTATION published in MDCCCLXXV. by way of INQUIRY into the true import and application of the VISION related DAN. ix. ver. 20. to the end, usually called, DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF SEVENTY WEEKS.

In the above mentioned Dissertation the three first words of ver. 24. were supposed to signify, and were translated, Seventy, seventy years of rest, (or, desolation)—But this translation having been objected to by persons, whose learning and judgment the Author held in great esteem, and who at the same time professed to think well of the general plan of the Dissertation, he was prompted to review the passage, and takes this opportunity to suggest the following correction of it.

After the vulgar translation of ver. 24. given in page 14. of the Dissertation, instead of the two next paragraphs, let the following be substituted.

THE two first words of this verse, which are generally understood to signify SEVENTY WEEKS, are literally the same, being distinguished only by the points or vowels, which are additions without authority. The first word however in thirteen MSS and one Edition is written שְׁבֻעִים, with a *Vau* in the middle, and may stand for WEEKS, as it is usually rendered. But if the point, which distinguishes the *Schin*

in the second word, be removed to the left hand, and instead of שבעים we read שבע, from the verb שבע, *to have enough*, the numeral will then be changed into a participial adjective, and the words may be rendered, *Weeks sufficient*, if the context admit of it.

The next word, נחתך, occupies the place of a verb, and is considered and construed as such by all the ancient Versions, in agreement with the preceding words. But this is apparently contrary to a primary rule in Grammar, in joining a singular verb with a nominative plural. The Grammarians indeed pretend to justify this anomaly, by appealing to the Hebrew idiom, whenever the plural noun is to be taken distributively. But that does not seem to be the case here. I apprehend therefore, that נחתך may be used in the singular number impersonally, as is the case with נשקר Lam. i. 14 *. With respect to the signification of this verb, there is no ascertaining it from the Hebrew, because it occurs no where else in the Bible; nor do the kindred Dialects, the Chaldee excepted, acknowledge it. The sense given to it by our English Translators, that of *determined* rests on the authority of the Chaldee. But from thence it appears to respect not simply, or at least not solely, a determination of the mind *de futuro*, but one carried into effect, a decision or sentence already put in force. Thus in the Targum, Esth. iv. 5. we read of one, who was called חתך, because that according to the sentence of his mouth the matters of the kingdom were finally and

* See Blayney's Note on Lam. i. 14. p. 308.

effectually

effectually decided †. Instead therefore of rendering נחתך in the plural, *have been determined*, it may be rendered, *it hath been determined*; and the passage may then be construed thus; *Weeks sufficient hath it been determined against thy people, and against thy holy city*; or, *hath judgment been upon thy people, and upon thy holy city*; that is, they have smarted long enough under the sentence of divine judgment, to answer all the purposes intended by it.

After a specification of the purposes for which the judgment had been inflicted, p. 16. l. 17. to p. 21. l. 11. the whole is recapitulated in the paragraph, which begins p. 21. l. 12. and should proceed thus from p. 22. l. 1.

— His prayer was heard; and the angel was commissioned to shew him, that the late judgment, which had befallen his people, was on the point of being removed, having already lasted a time fully sufficient to answer the intentions of providence, which were not to destroy them, but to correct their enormities, and to bring about the salutary effect of reformation; to make them sensible of the hand of God, by confirming the words of his servants the prophets; and to prepare them for the renewal of that holy worship, which had been suspended for a while on account of their wickedness, but would again be accepted on their true repentance—What

† Calvin in his Comment upon the place observes, that the verb חתך properly signifies *finire* or *terminare*; and cites *Barbinel*, or *Abarbinel*, the most learned perhaps of all the Rabbins, who interprets it by the word, *intercidere*. And I think that *decidere*, the word by which the Lexicographers usually explain חתך, signifies also not simply to *resolve*, but to *resolve with effect*. So that נחתך, being interpreted *decisum est*, affords the sense above given.

could

could be more apposite than this? I am therefore inclined to consider the following as a literal and just translation of the 24th verse; *Weeks sufficient hath judgment been upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to check the revolt, and to put an end to sins, and to make atonement for iniquity, and to bring again the righteousness of ancient times, and to seal (i. e. authenticate) the divine oracle, and the prophet, (who delivered it) and to anoint (i. e. sanctify anew) the most holy things.*

Page 67. l. 10. *Instead of, SEVENTY, SEVENTY YEARS OF REST (or, DESOLATION) HAVE BEEN—read, WEEKS SUFFICIENT HATH JUDGMENT BEEN—*

Dele the ADDENDA at the end.

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